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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 - 16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A roof covering including a plurality of successive generally horizontal courses of laminated shingles, the shingles in each course being laid in a side-by-side relationship and horizontally offset from the shingles in adjacent courses, each laminated shingle comprising:

an overlay member having front and rear surfaces, the overlay member including a headlap portion and a butt portion, the butt portion including a plurality of tabs separated by cutouts, each tab including a layer of granules on the front surface forming a generally uniform color blend, and each cutout being narrow when compared to the width of the tabs to provide an overall roof covering appearance of a natural slate roof; and

an underlay member having a front surface attached to the rear surface of the overlay member;

wherein each tab has a single color blend, the color blends of some of the tabs of each shingle being a color blend different from the color blend of others of the tabs; and

wherein one of the color blends of the tabs occurs more frequently than any of the other color blends of the tabs, thereby defining a predominant tab color blend, with the frequency of tabs of the predominant color blend in the roof covering being sufficiently prevalent to provide the roof covering with an so that the appearance that of the roof covering simulates a natural slate roof.

18 - 45. (Canceled)

46. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 17, wherein the predominant tab color blend occurs in roughly 60 percent of the tabs.

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47. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 46, wherein each laminated shingle has at least four tabs.

48. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 46, wherein each laminated shingle is a three-tab laminated shingle.

49-51. (Canceled)

52. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 17, wherein the predominant tab color blend occurs in over 50 percent of the tabs.

53. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 52, wherein each laminated shingle has at least four tabs.

54. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 52, wherein each laminated shingle is a three-tab laminated shingle.

55. (Currently amended) A roof covering including a plurality of successive generally horizontal courses of laminated shingles, the shingles in each course being laid in a side-by-side relationship and horizontally offset from the shingles in adjacent courses, each laminated shingle comprising:

an overlay member having front and rear surfaces, the overlay member including a headlap portion and a butt portion, the butt portion including a plurality of tabs separated by cutouts, each tab including a layer of granules on the front surface forming a generally uniform color blend, and each cutout being narrow when compared to the width of the tabs to provide an overall roof covering appearance of a natural slate roof; and

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an underlay member having a front surface attached to the rear surface of the overlay member;

wherein each tab has a single color blend, the color blends of some of the tabs of each shingle being a color blend different from the color blend of others of the tabs; and

wherein one of the color blends of the tabs is gray, the gray color blend occurring more frequently than any of the other color blends of the tabs, thereby defining a predominant tab color blend, with the frequency of tabs of the grey color blend in the roof covering being sufficiently prevalent to provide the roof covering with an so that the appearance that of the roof covering simulates a natural slate roof.

56. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 55, wherein the predominant tab color blend occurs in roughly 60 percent of the tabs.

57. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 56, wherein each laminated shingle has at least four tabs.

58. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 56, wherein each laminated shingle is a three-tab laminated shingle.

59-61. (Canceled)

62. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 55, wherein the predominant tab color blend occurs in over 50 percent of the tabs.

63. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 62, wherein each laminated shingle has at least four tabs.

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64. (Previously presented) The roof covering according to Claim 62, wherein each laminated shingle is a three-tab laminated shingle.

65. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 17, wherein the cutouts have a width of about 1 inch and the tabs have a width of about 6 inches.

66. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 55, wherein the cutouts have a width of about 1 inch and the tabs have a width of about 6 inches.

67. (Currently Amended) A roof covering including a plurality of successive generally horizontal courses of laminated shingles, the shingles in each course being laid in a side-by-side relationship and horizontally offset from the shingles in adjacent courses, each laminated shingle comprising:

an overlay member having front and rear surfaces, the overlay member including a headlap portion and a butt portion, the butt portion including a plurality of tabs separated by cutouts, each tab including a layer of granules on the front surface forming a generally uniform color blend; and

an underlay member having a front surface attached to the rear surface of the overlay member;

wherein each tab has a single color blend, the color blends of some of the tabs of each shingle being a color blend different from the color blend of others of the tabs; and

wherein one of the color blends of the tabs occurs more frequently than any of the other color blends of the tabs, thereby defining a predominant tab color blend, with the other color blends being accent colors that occur less frequently in the roof covering, with the frequency of tabs of the predominant color blend in the roof

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covering being sufficiently prevalent to provide the roof covering with an appearance that of the roof covering ~~so that the appearance that of the roof covering~~ simulates a natural slate roof.

68. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 67, wherein the predominant tab color blend occurs in roughly 60 percent of the tabs.

69. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 67, wherein the predominant tab color blend occurs in over 50 percent of the tabs.

70. (Previously Presented) The roof covering according to Claim 67, wherein the cutouts have a width of about 1 inch and the tabs have a width of about 6 inches.

71. (New) The roof covering according to Claim 17, wherein the exposed areas of tabs of the predominant color blend in the roof covering have sufficient area to provide the roof covering with an appearance that simulates a natural slate roof.

72. (New) The roof covering according to Claim 55, wherein the exposed areas of tabs of the grey color blend in the roof covering have sufficient area to provide the roof covering with an appearance that simulates a natural slate roof.

73. (New) The roof covering according to Claim 67, wherein the exposed areas of tabs of the predominant color blend in the roof covering have sufficient area to provide the roof covering with an appearance that simulates a natural slate roof.